REPORT OF AUDITOR

Aggregate Value of Property teresting to note some llustrations as to the differences that have occurred there. \$259,011.508.

OVER MILLION INCREASE

GREAT INCREASE IN RAILROAD PROPERTY.

THE DISBURSEMENTS WERE \$1,244,917

Receipts of the Secretary State Have Been \$30,709 Greater Than Ever Before--Circuses Yielded the State an Increase of \$1,366.

the State for the fiscal year ending Novemberr 30, 1897, was issued vester-

The cash balance in the hands of the State Treasurer is shown to be 893, 944.47.

The statement of the educational fund shows an excess of disbursements over receipts of \$2,041.98. This condi tion was created by the State Board of Education in apportioning to the schools the uninvested assets of the fund. An apportionment of the nine cents per capita was thought desirable and decided upon, and to realize a sum sufficient to effect such an apportionment, it was necessary to anticipate : nominal amount of the receipts from the interest on the invested assets of the fund, which receipts, it was judged would be realized before the return of all the warrants, distributing the amount apportioned, to the Treasury Department for payment.

The account of "contingencies" shows an aggregate expenditures of \$43,886.21 more than one-fourth of which is chargeable to the month of December. S. M.

The Auditor, in his letter to the Governor, suggests in this connection that a greater degree of perspicuity and convenience can be attained by the introductional of additional accounts, and a more extended classification of items than has heretofore been observed.

The total aggregate taxable value of all property in the State subject to taxation was, according to the State Auditor's report of 1896, \$257,437,227.99. The total aggregate value of such property is shown, by this report, to be 8259,011,508,23-a net increase of \$1,-574,280.24. Comparative figures of the two reports are as follows: 1896. Value of real and

personal property.....\$230.861.131.00 1897. Value of real and personal property.... 229,854,469.00

Decrease in value from

telegraph, steamboat

1896. Value of railroad. itelegraph, steambloat and canal property ... 26,576,096.99 1897. Value of railroad.

and canal property . . . 29,157,099,23 Increase in value over

2,581,002.24

Net increase over 1896. . 1.574,280.23 According to former reports of this department, it appears that the real and personal property of the State has been gradually decreasing in taxable value for the past five years.

The report of 1891, covering the tax returns of 1890, shows the aggregate staxable value of real and quesonal property to have been \$242,449,891. The current report (1897) covering the returns of 1896, shows the aggregate taxable value of the same kind of property to be \$229.854,499. The decrease in value, therefore, from 1890 to 1896 is \$12,595,392. At the present rate of taxation this decrease in the taxable value of real and personal property in volves a revenue loss to the State fund of \$26,000, and to the public school fund of \$22,000, in round numbers. As compared with the Auditor's report of 1896, covering tax returns of 1895, this report, covering the tax returns of 1896, shows a decrease in the taxable value of real and personal property of \$1,006,722.

"The course of declination in taxable values, here shown," says the Auditor in his letter, "has been persisted in since 1891, notwithstanding the wellknown fact that there has been an appreciable augmentation of business investment factory building, municipal improvements, etc. There must be causes for such conditions, and these causes must be discovered and dealt with before any rational effort can be made to prevent a further decline in values.

"Doubtless that period of acute busiof 1893," had much to do with the of that period is probably felt up to this time in estimating the taxable value

Vitality, use BLUE LABEL SPECIAL—double strength—will give strength and tone to every part and effect a permanent cure. Cheapest and best. impairment of values, and the impetus of property. Whatever adverse influence such a cause as that may have on taxable values, must ordinarily be submitted to by a State, with a knowledge that it, glene, can prescribe no remedy,

"But there may be causes with which the date Man deal effectively, and among them may be reckoned the flagrantly apparent carelessness and incapacity of a considerable number of those to whom is entrusted the work and duty of primarily listing property for taxation. A statement of fact can not be violated in asserting that too often a list-taker is a man who 'gets a little job,' rather than a man who is qualified for this very important work of the State. The general consequence is an irregularity in the annual returns of tangible and immovable property that is astonishing. For illustration, it may be stated that the minimum number of acres of land listed in any one year during the past ten years was 27,287,-466 acres; this was in 1891. The maximum number of acres listed in any one year during the past ten years was 28,715,324; this was in 1888. These figures show a difference of 1,427,858 acres between the Esting of one year and the listening of another. It impossible that land can get up and walk out of the State during the term for tax listing in one year, and show itself for listing another year. It's therefore evident that there is some looseness in the system of listing now observed, or some laxity or

incompetency on the part of those charged with the duty of primarily

making up the tax Est. "The irregularities in listing of course begin in the counties, and it may be interesting to note some llustrations as to In doing this, note will be taken of the returns for the last five years, viz.: 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, and 1897. For instance one county (Alamance) returned for taxation in 1893, 234,000 acres; in 1894, 231,000 acres; in 1895, 235,000 acres; in 1896, 265,000 acres; in 1897, 262,505 heads this showing a difference one year and another during the past five years, of 34,000 acres in that county."

The receipts of the Public Fund for the year ending November 30th, 1896. were \$1,259,458.40. The receipts for the year ending November 30th, 1897, were \$1,292,547.67—an increase over 1896 of \$33,089.27.

The disbursements for the year 1896 were \$1,244,917.57. The disbursements for 1897 were \$1,303,904.11—an increase over 1896 of \$58,986.54. The fact that the expenses of a session of the General Assembly are included in the disburse-The annual report of the Auditor of ments for 1897 accounts for the increased expenditure.

The revenue receipts from real and

personal property were \$2,181.03 less in of than in 1896; but the revenue derived under schedules "B" and "C" known as privilege taxes, for 1897, exceed the receipts of 1896, from the same sources, by \$17,337.72.

The most notable increase of revenue from any one source for 1897, over the previous year, is in the returns of collections made by the Secretary of State. The excess of receipts through that De partment, over 1896, amounts to \$30,-739.83.

The revenue from railroad property exceeds the receipts of 1896 by \$5,030.43- change in the license tax schedule on piano and organ dealers by the General Assembly of 1897 has caused a loss of \$1,300,00 from that source. The receints in 1896 were \$1,750.00; in 1897,

There is an increase of \$1,607.05 from telegraph and telephone companies, the tax being two per cent on gross receipts, The increase of revenue from tax on incomes is \$730.02. The gress amount of incomes returned for taxation for

1896 is \$630,624. The gross amount of

incomes returned for the previous year was \$550,893, Circusses and menageries yielded for the year 1897 an increase of \$1,366,50

over 1896. The receipts from "Merchants' Pur chase Tax" shows an increase 82,822,54.

There is an increase of \$1,505,00 from lawyers, physicians and dentists over the previous year.

White polls increase from 171,915 to 172,281, while colored polls shows the small increase between 65,697 and 65,

"During the year 1897 a very large number of applications for pensions were filed in the department. It must be said that the general presentations made in these applications are of such a character as to make it difficult, in most cases. to satisfactorily determine whether the applicant is legally entitled to such pension as the State can pay or not. There

is no rashness in asserting that there are those now on the State pension roll who are neither morally nor legally enti teld to the aid they are receiving from for those who would lose if he won. the State, and it may be reasonably supposed that there are those who have applied for pensions, not on the roll on account of some defect in the applications, as filed, who richly deserve all that the State can offer them.

There was a net increase of 58 pen sioners during the year 1897.

"The substantial and beneficent features of Building and Loan Associations do not appear to have found general lodgment in the permanent appreciation of the citizens of this State or such associations do not apear to regard the attitude of the State as favorable to them. At one time there were sixty organizations of this character operating in North Carolina. This report shows that thirty-four companies were licensed to do business in 1896. Of this number. six are foreign companies. These, as well as the twenty-eight State companies, exhibit evidences of soundness and stability.'

Mr. Ayer adds that for any measure of success which may attach to the work of his department for the past year, credit is more largely due to Mr. John A. Sims, the painstaking and efficient chief clerk, than to any other.

The Kinston Free Press says that Mr. J. W. Grainger shipped a box of aspara- hearts be pure from evil," sang the boy gus to Philadelphia on Monday.

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BICHMOND.

REX'S EASTER MUSIC.

BY ANNIE ISABEL WILLIS.



in his father's light, as if through a dark mist. room, and from it opened dining

"Bother! Why can't I get it?" Rex went on walking and singing. The That room seemed all ablaze. He heard him. His voice rang out exquisitely high the shouts of men. Then he found his with papers. Rex stopped again.

if it were a companion.

Winsted, but years before-11, to be ex- dow. "Follow me!" he cried and stepped plicit-his happy mother one day when out. given up afterward. The boy's life up to the time of this

story can be briefly sketched. Left motherless at 7, with memories of a lovely face and tender, brooding care which still lingered with her son, who associated her vaguely with the madonnas that he saw in store windows, the boy lived alone with his father.

Singing was his passion. He was one of the leading voices in a famous boy choir, and the best part of the year to him was when the Easter music was being learned. It wanted but a day before that great occasion, and all his spare time at home was devoted to practice.

Mr. Hamilton Winsted was an ambitious man. He was engaged in a paying though not extensive business. How to enlarge it had been a problem ever since he had known what a wonderful voice his boy had. Within a few months he had found a new object to gain money for in the promise of a second wife. It was a handsome girl who had made him this promise, and his pride amused itself by fancying how well she must be attired and in what style she must live when she became Mrs. Hamilton Winsted. She was quite as good as she was beautiful, and he instinctively kept from her knowledge some of the ways in which he was striving

to grow rich for her sake and the boy's. As it grew later Mr. Winsted's mind became keener and more alert. The visions of his promised bride and his son faded to give place to some new plan of speculation that suddenly occurred to him. He thought it all out, aided by calculations on paper. The sum that might be gained was large, and his face grew elated with the joy of greed. It was a look that Miss Leonora Elsworth would not have cared to see there, and it was not softened by any pity.

But in the hall there was another look on a handsome, boyish face. Rex had forgotten that it was past his bedtime. His countenance, aglow at first with an artist's delight in his art, grew brighter with the realization of the meaning of what he sang. It was the first time he had entered so completely into the spirit of his Easter music, and he rendered it so well that his father begame gradually conscious of the words. The repetitions of the faithful practice fairly burned the syllables into

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it all abroad! The passover of gladness, The passover of God!

From death to life eternal, From earth unto the sky, Our Christ hath brought us over,

With hymns of victory. So sang the clear soprano that in a few hours was to enchant all hearers at Christ church, and the change of his intonation as he rendered the last half of the stanza was perfect. The listener in that quiet library began to grow very uneasy. Then he heard

Our hearts be pure from evil That we may see aright and the rest of those words composed so

long ago by John of Damascus. "Our again and again, as if some divine impulse guided him.

"Mine isn't," thought the man. "Mine isn't. Mine is filled with evil plans tonight. What am I intending to do? Perhaps wreck some happy homes—perhaps for it is all a game of chance, though I feel pretty sure of winning-perhaps mean by Emerson's advice?" Easily, Quickly, Permanently Restored | wreck my own. Then where would my



"OUR HEARTS BE PURE FROM EVIL." pure hearted boy be? But it is all for him. all for his rausic and for Leonora. Isn't

that a good enough motive?" Then he listened again to the words borne into the quiet library from the hall. At last he fell to his knees in a struggle that did not end until late-a struggle between his desire for gain and his strange, new conviction that his way of getting it would be sinful.

He never heard his son's knock, followed by the boy's disappointed footsteps as he started for bed, supposing his father was too busy to stop. It was 1 o'clock when the man followed. He had resolved to give up forever the making of esse beyond comprehension.

money by unlawful speculation. The battle over, he sleet the sleep of atter exhaustion. In the next room the fair haired singer, his mission well performed, though [Copyright, 1898, by American Press Asso- unconsciously, also slept, but not so heavily. At 3 in the morning he was awak-EX WINSTED ened by his own coughing. His room was was walking up full of smoke, and he could see nothing and down the hall but the faintest glimmer of the night

> house. The place "Father! Father!" he cried. The servwas used as the ants slept too far away to hear, and the family sitting smoke that had roused him had stupefied the tired man.

Rex jumped from his bed, wound a room, parlor and blanket around him, holding a corner of library. His head it over his face, and tried to feel his way was thrown back. to the front room and the alcove where his the hair lightly father's bed was. A door, opening at his tossed away from touch, let him into the hall. There it was the white fore- easier to breathe. The stairs were free head, now slightly from fire, but the boy never thought of wrinkled with ef- descending, "Father!" he kept calling, and then a more heroic deed was never done. He let himself into the front The light, ringing step ceased fortunate- chamber enveloped in the blanket and felt ly just as Rex gave a vexed little stamp. for his father's bed. It was a fiery ordeal. boyish vent to his feelings had relieved the rumble of fire apparatus outside and and clear. It was like a woman's-like father and shook him. "Wake up, fahis mother's, from whom he had inherited ther!" he cried, but his voice was muffled it, and it conjured up a vision of her to in the blanket. Some one in a belinet her husband, shut in his library and busy threw up the alcove window and leaped in from a ladder. He grasped the boy. "Confound you! You're doing awfully "No, no!" cried Rex. "Take my fatonight," he said, addressing his voice as ther. I'm all right. I will not go first." The fireman then saw the unconscious fig-His full name was Richard Hamilton ure on the bed and lifted it to the win-

her husband laughingly said the baby Rex tried to fellow, but fell fainting ruled the whole house, applied the name over the sill and hung there while those of kingly meaning to him. It was never, below shouted to hasten the fireman with his burden.

> "Another ladder!" called some one. 'Hurry! Hurry!" cried the crowd. It was all over soon, and both father and son were removed to a hospital. The fa-

ther was scarcely hurt and soon recovered;



"I'M ALL RIGHT, FATHER," HE SAID FEEBLY. the boy had been badly burned in that brief time of agony, and it was uncertain if he could get well.

On Easter morning his father and promised mother bent over him. Neither noticed the sweet tumult that the church bells were making; neither thought of its being just the hour that Rex would have been leading the processional hymn at Christ church.

"Oh, my son, my son!" the man groaned. "My life was not worth your sacri-

Rex opened his eyes, sunk deep in bandages about his head. He had not before been fully conscious, but now the old buoyant spirit shone faintly through those

"I'm all right, father," he said feebly. They were the only rational words he ut tered for many a day. Then he glanced up at the lovely woman's face and said, "Mother!" before lapsing into insensibil

The word, though spoken wanderingly, was the seal of adoption to Leonora Ells worth, and the Easter day was made more memorable to her by the story, brokenly told by the father beside the boy's bed, of the night's struggle preceding the fire.

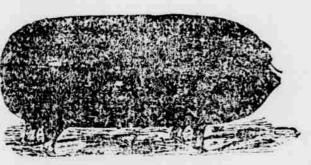
They were married soon, and, though it was a weary time before Rex was able to sing in Christ church, he was tenderly cared for by one whom he could rightly call mother. As soon as she was married she began to help her husband in his better, if slower, plans for cultivating their boy's voice if he should recover. He did get well at last, and their united efforts for his music were so successful that he has become a famous tenor, and what was once his pastime has grown to be his life work. You may have heard him sing, for he is a star in many concerts, but I will tell you that if you have not listened to him on Easter day you cannot realize half bis wonderful power.

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